



YOUR UNBORN CHILD

is completely dependent on you, its mother, for safety and well-being. Most mothers-to-be know that diet, rest, and exercise are important during pregnancy. What many don't realize is the importance of safety belts.

Safety belts are designed to save lives. In a traffic crash, a safety belt can save your life and the life of your unborn child.

The leading cause of fetal death in a car crash is death of the mother, and fetal injury is closely related to the amount of injury to the mother.

You can't always prevent a car crash, but you can protect yourself and your baby by wearing your safety belt.

REGARDING AIR BAGS



Safety belts and air bags provide the best protection from death and injury in a car crash. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that passenger side air bags increase the fatality risk to child passenger from infant to about age 12. Infants and children 12 and under should never be placed in the front seat of a vehicle equipped with a passenger side air bag. By putting children in the back and using appropriate restraints, you can minimize the risk of serious injury. WARNING: If a child must ride in the front seat that is equipped with a passenger side air bag because all seating positions are occupied, move the vehicle seat as far back from the dashboard as possible. Note: Air bags deploy in 1/25 of a second at speeds up to 200 mph.

REMEMBER: Beginning with the ride home from the hospital, infants should ride in a rear-facing federally approved child safety seat. After reaching 1 year of age and 20 pounds they should ride in a forward-facing upright convertible seat. The following is South Dakota child passenger restraint law (SDCL §32-37): The driver of any passenger vehicle transporting a child under five years of age in South Dakota shall secure the child in an approved child safety seat. If the child weighs at least 40 pounds, the child can be secured in a seat belt instead of a safety seat. Children covered by the law may not be removed from the safety seat for any reason while the vehicle is moving. A driver who violates this law will be fined \$20.

Although there is no specific state law covering booster seat for children 40 to 80 pounds, NHTSA strongly recommends that booster seats be used. A booster seat is designed to lift a child into position so that a seat belt can be properly fitted.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



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SAFETY BELT USE DURING PREGNANCY



South Dakota

Department of Health



SAFETY BELTS AND PREGNANCY

- ◆ There is no evidence that safety belts increase the chance of injury to the fetus, uterus, or placenta, no matter how severe the collision.
- ◆ The fetus is protected in a fluid-filled sac in the uterus.
- ◆ The uterus is protected by organs, muscles and bones.
- ◆ Fetal injury due to pressure from the safety belt is rare, occurring in less than 1 out of 10,000 car crashes.

PROPER USE DURING PREGNANCY

1

Place the lap belt under your abdomen, as low on your hips as possible and across your upper thighs.

2

Position the shoulder belt between the breasts.

3

Adjust your safety belt as snugly as is comfortably possible.



4

If necessary, adjust your seat so your safety belt is worn properly.

5

If slight discomfort is experienced while traveling, consult your doctor for tips on making your trip more pleasant.

AFTER THE BABY IS BORN

- ◆ Infant only and convertible child safety seats are designed to protect babies and small children in the event of a car crash and should be used at all times.
- ◆ Your arms provide security for your baby but not during a car crash. The enormous force of a collision can throw the child from your arms with destructive power.
- ◆ Studies show that the proper use of child safety seats decrease the chances of injury by over 60 percent.
- ◆ As a parent and caregiver, you should continue to wear your safety belt. Act as a positive role-model for your children, so they too will grow up with a healthy attitude.